

GENERAL NOTES

A Loon (*Gavia immer*) Caught on a Fishing Line.—November 17, 1918, Mr. Fred Lynn, of Branchport, caught a female Loon while trolling for bass in Lake Keuka. He had just felt his line ease up when the Loon broke water about a hundred feet behind and began to shake its head. At the same time he thought that he had a bite and began to pull in his line when he saw at once that he had "hooked" the Loon. It had swallowed the bait, a minnow, which was on a small Kinzie hook and in its struggles got tangled in the line and was landed with difficulty. As soon as it was landed in the boat it struggled and set up a great cry. It was impossible to dislodge the hook so Mr. Lynn cut the line as far down the Loon's neck as possible and gave the Loon to Mr. Albert Boyd who lived nearby. Mr. Boyd kept it just one day, then returned it to the lake. It dived at once and after coming up way out in the lake was last seen swimming rapidly away. Both Mr. Lynn and Mr. Boyd are well known to me and I vouch for the truth of the above.—VERDI BURTON, *Branchport, N. Y.*

Intestinal Cæca in the Anhinga.—Intestinal cæca in *Anhinga anhinga* seem subject in different individuals to variation in development, so that there has been some discrepancy and uncertainty in descriptions of them. In the following note is given a brief account of a few specimens that I have examined with some discussion of observations made by others.

In an immature male Anhinga, hatched in the National Zoological Gardens, that died when about six months old from the effects of an ill-advised meal of sand, I found two cæca, each about four mm. long. They were developed as small nodules partly embedded in the wall of the intestine, 125 mm. from the anus. While both cæca were well-formed, firm, and rounded, the one on the right side was slightly larger than the one on the left. From the inside these blind-guts appeared as shallow pockets in the intestinal wall with their inner, anterior margins somewhat thickened, more opaque in color than the surrounding tissue and perceptible as slight projections to the sense of touch. The right-pocket was about one millimeter deep while the left one was slightly less.

The intestine (preserved in formalin) of another bird collected by Francis Harper in the Okefinokee Swamp had two cæca, one of which was represented merely by a slight, thickened ridge in the intestinal wall. A third specimen—an adult male that I killed in the mangrove swamps behind Cape Sable, Florida—when examined in the flesh had two cæca barely indicated as slight thickenings in the intestine that were almost imperceptible from the outside. The lower part of the intestine of this bird was placed in alcohol at the time but now shows no indication of the cæca even when examined minutely with the aid of a low power mag-

nification under a dissecting microscope. Another bird that I have seen had the cæca represented by small, slightly thickened ridges that would have been overlooked without careful search.

Several notes on the cæca of the American Anhinga have appeared in print previously. Garrod¹ remarks that there was one cæcum present, as in herons, in specimens that he dissected. In a second communication² he confirms his previous observation, stating that in this species he found no trace of a second cæcum. Forbes³ notes that normally he found one cæcum but that in one individual there was in addition to a single cæcum of the ordinary size a much more rudimentary one developed on the other side of the intestine. While in another paper⁴ he says that "it is not unusual . . . in a group of birds in which the cæca are of small size, and probably of no physiological importance, to find specimens or species with the normal number of cæca reduced by one. I may give as instances . . . *Plotus anhinga* amongst the Steganopodes." Beddard⁵ records one cæcum in some specimens of the Anhinga while in others he notes that there were two. Mitchell⁶ found only one vestigial cæcum in a bird that he examined.

From this it would appear that as Forbes has supposed the intestinal cæca in this species are not functional; and that they are on the road to disappearance. One cæcum often seems to be larger than the other, while the second may be vestigial. It is my belief, from my own observations, that some indication of this second one may be found if the gut is examined while fresh or after preservation in some fluid that causes rapid hardening. It would seem that at times this rudiment may be imperceptible in specimens dissected from alcohol or that it may be overlooked without minute search for it. It is possible that cæca are more prominent in young birds and that one or both of them may decrease in size with age.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

On the Nesting of the Black Duck in Ohio.—In regard to the article in the last number of 'The Auk' on this subject by Mr. E. A. Doolittle, I would like to state that the species formerly nested quite frequently at the Grand Reservoir here in western Ohio, especially at two places, where the Big and Little Chickasaw creeks empty into the Reservoir. Mr. Doolittle quotes my article in 'The Auk', January, 1910, but evidently overlooked my record for the recent nesting of this duck in the spring of 1911, as recorded in 'The Wilson Bulletin,' December, 1912, page 198, which is a good and reliable record. Writers on Ohio birds

¹ Proc. Zool. Soc. London, 1876, p. 344.

² Proc. Zool. Soc. London, 1878, p. 681.

³ Proc. Zool. Soc. London, 1882, p. 210.

⁴ Voy. of Challenger, Zool., Vol. IV, Pt. XI, 1882, p. 22.

⁵ Structure and Classification of Birds, 1898, p. 403.

⁶ Trans. Linn. Soc. (London), Zool., Ser. 2, Vol. VIII, p. 192.